

Coins

Snow and silver pile up

By Roger Boye

HERE ARE answers to more questions from readers about coins and currency:

Q—During one of our February snowstorms, we decided to sort through three old trunks that have been in the attic for years. Our big surprise was finding a small box full of terribly old silver dollars—most dated before 1923, a few going back to 1889. Are they worth anything?—T.B., Hammond, Ind.

A—Yes. Assuming the silver dollars are in "fine condition" or better, you could sell them to a coin dealer for at least \$6.20 each. Some of the coins might be worth much more than that, depending on their dates and mint marks.

You should buy a copy of R.S. Yeoman's "Red Book" or another bas-

ic hobby reference and evaluate your "find." Or take the silver dollars to a couple of coin stores. Many dealers in the Chicago area will appraise small quantities of old coins without charge.

Q—A few years ago, I was given five \$1 bills that were printed early this century. They are fascinating to look at, but are quite dirty from having been in circulation. How can I clean them?—A.C., Chicago

A—Many experienced currency collectors wash old currency by using a mild soap and warm water. The laborious cleaning process usually improves the appearance of the bills.

However, the novice is best advised to let the dirt be, because an antique bill can be damaged during a washing. For example, the ink on a bill might fade if a hard soap or detergent is used.